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NEWS RELEASE

MIAMI VALLEY EXECUTIVES TO GET THE LOWDOWN ON MANAGING GENERATIONS X AND Y

DAYTON, Ohio — In the old corporate pattern, the corner offices were occupied by experienced members of the older generation, who were separated from the promising up-and-comers by several layers of intermediary executives. These days, with downsizing and flattened organizations, the generations are more likely to directly interact.

And therein lies a potential problem.

Carolyn Martin, co-author of the just-released *Managing the Generation Mix*, will address executives from top Miami Valley companies on Wednesday, March 13, for a presentation of the Center for Leadership and Executive Development at the University of Dayton. She will talk about the changing workforce and how top executives can recruit, retain and manage workers who fall into the Generation X and Y categories.

The session will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the National Composite Center in Kettering.

In conjunction with her program, 12 management majors in an inaugural UD leadership seminar have been examining the companies from a Gen Y viewpoint and will offer their research to executives in a student panel discussion moderated by Martin and break-out sessions at the program.

Student research ranges from evaluating the companies' Web sites to actually applying for entry-level positions and evaluating responses from the companies, said Paul Sweeney, professor of management and marketing who teaches the seminar. "They're really looking at three issues — how do these companies recruit new employees, how do they manage them once they are hired and how those employees interact with others."

By the end of the semester, students will produce a report summarizing their findings.

"Organizations today are in a different world than many executives grew up in," said Martin, who also co-authored *Managing Generation Y* with Bruce Tulgan. "Today, every person of every age is needed. Needs and expectations are no longer governed by any one generation.

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"Organizations are governed by the marketplace — the unpredictable, unstable marketplace. Executives must look at the demands of the marketplace and figure out how to leverage the skills and talents of everyone. The obvious skills of Generation Y and X are technology-oriented. What organization is crazy enough not to leverage that?"

For workplace issues, Generation X covers those born between 1965 and 1977 while Generation Y describes those born between 1978 and 1984.

The Silent Generation wants work that is personally satisfying, and the Baby Boomers identify themselves by their careers, Martin said. Generation X feels a job should allow them to amass marketable skills, and Generation Y wants the opportunity to do challenging and meaningful work with great co-workers.

"They are the most team-ready we've seen in a while," she said.

Employees who fall into the Generation X category are impatient with protocol, Martin said. "They ask, 'Why do I have to go through four levels to get an answer? Why can't I run into the CEO in the corridor and ask a question or make a suggestion?' We recommend that executives be open to that. It sends the message that he or she is valued, is heard."

The worst thing executives can do is not respect the young people just because they are young, she said. Some unconsciously dismiss the willingness and ability of the young to contribute.

There is also not enough understanding that this is the "education-is-cool" generation, she said. "I give a lot of credit to the adults in the lives of Generation Y. The Boomer parents did a good job of conveying that success is tied to education, not social position. Companies can provide an environment for ongoing training to take advantage of that. Generation X has the same attitude: If the opportunity to learn and grow dries up, they're out of there."

A good direction came from a 16-year-old already thinking about the years ahead, she said. "He said, 'Managers should make us want to come to work.' What better rule of thumb than that?"

The Center for Leadership and Executive Development provides customized educational programs and consulting services in executive, management and professional development. Partner companies include Copeland, Deloitte & Touche, Delphi, Elder-Beerman, Fifth Third Bank, Iams, Mead, Midmark, NCR, Premiere Health Partners, Procter and Gamble, Reynolds and Reynolds, Smith Industries, Standard Register, the University of Dayton, Vectron and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

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